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INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM (updated, December 1, 2011)

Date: November 22, 2011

To: Commercial Industry Striped Bass Workgroup

From: Matt Lawrence and Mike Luisi

CC: Tom O'Connell, Lynn Fegley, Allison Luettel

With the 2012 fishing season quickly approaching, the Department must proceed with allocating the 2012 Chesapeake Bay commercial striped bass harvest quota to the different commercial gear sectors. As with previous years, we anticipate the challenge of addressing the need for increasing the quota of the commercial pound net gear sector to account for the rising number of permits declared into the pound net fishery. We will ask the striped bass industry work group to address this issue at the meeting on November 30, 2011.

Background

The Chesapeake Bay commercial striped bass quota has been historically distributed to the different gear sectors by catch history. Prior to 2009, this distribution was consistently 45% to the gill net sector, 30% to the hook and line sector, and 25% to the pound net sector.

In 2009, the permit transfer process opened the opportunity for pound net fishermen to hold up to five pound net permits. This has resulted in an increase of striped bass pound net permits each year since the transfer process was implemented (Table 1). However, the number of actual pound net holders has not changed over this time. The number of declared pound net permits will be 232 in 2012, up from 152 in 2008.

Table 1. Distribution of declared permits in the commercial striped bass fishery, 2008-2012.

Year	Hook and Line		Pound Net		Gill Net	
	Permit Holders	Participation	Permit Holders (permits)	Participation	Permits Holders (permits)	Participation
2008			(152)			
2009	961	43%	103 (181)	93%	821	54%
2010	953	35%	101 (199)	98%	711 (815)	39%
2011	912	---	101 (223)	---	652 (765)	---
2012	892	---	? (232)	---	635 (746)	---

The pound net fishery operates on a seasonal allocation system that is determined by the amount of quota available and the number of permits declared into the gear sector. With increased declarations, the annual allocation of each participant is decreased as the quota is distributed. In 2009, the striped bass work group chose to move commercial hook and line quota into the pound net quota to account for each new pound net permit (Table 2). They capped the amount of quota that could shift at 100,000 lbs. In 2011, the amount of quota required to account for new pound net permits and maintain the previous years annual permit allocation exceeded 100,000 lbs. The striped bass work group chose to shift 150,000 lbs of striped bass quota from hook and line exclusively to adjust for the new pound net permits.

Table 2. Allocation of commercial striped bass quota between gear types, 2009-2011.

Year	Reallocation (lbs)	Pound Net Quota (lbs)	Hook and Line Quota (lbs)	Gill Net Quota (lbs)
2009	44,000	607,708	632,449	1,014,674
2010	84,000	611,923	599,907	899,861
2011	150,000	640,968	439,162	883,743

Action needed

A decision on how to allocate the 2012 commercial quota between the commercial gear sectors is needed. We have provided several possible scenarios for the 2012 quota allocation in Table 3. Please review this table and discuss it with your constituents, but consider developing alternative scenarios to those provided here. The work group will address this issue and determine its outcome at the November 30th work group meeting.

An example of the scenarios describe in Table 3 is as follows. The number of declared pound net permits has increased to 232 for the 2012 fishing year. If 100,000 lbs of quota is shifted into the pound net fishery, the pound net quota will be 566,420 lbs and the maximum permit allocation in the pound net fishery will be 2,600 lbs. If the work group decides to take 50% of the reallocation from hook and line and 50% from gill net, the quotas for these gear types will be 509,704 lbs and 789,556 lbs, respectively. If the work group votes to move 150,000 lbs into the pound net fishery and take 75% of the reallocation from hook and line and 25% of the reallocation from gill net, the pound net quota will be 616,420 lbs with a maximum permit allocation of 2,820 lbs. The hook and line quota would be 447,204 lbs and the gill net quota would be 802,056 lbs in this example.

Table 3. Options for distributing the 2012 commercial striped bass quota.

Scenario	Pound net quota (lbs)	Quota shift (lbs)	Maximum PN allocation (lbs)	100% H&L 0% GN	75% H&L 25% GN	50% H&L 50% GN	25% H&L 75% GN	0% H&L 100% GN
No Reallocation	466,420	0	2,150	559,704 839,556	559,704 839,556	559,704 839,556	559,704 839,556	559,704 839,556
2009 Cap 100,000	566,420	100,000	2,600	459,704 839,556	484,704 814,556	509,704 789,556	534,704 764,556	559,704 739,556
Move 150,000	616,420	150,000	2,850	409,704 839,556	447,204 802,056	484,704 764,556	522,204 727,056	559,704 689,556
Move 200,000	666,420	200,000	3,050	359,704 839,556	409,704 789,556	459,704 739,556	509,704 689,556	559,704 639,556
Move 250,000	716,420	250,000	3,300	309,704 839,556	372,204 777,056	434,704 714,556	497,204 652,056	559,704 589,556

Update, December 1, 2011

Action item

At the November 30th meeting, the Work Group passed a motion that recommends that the Department re-allocate 150,000 pounds of commercial striped bass quota into the pound net fishery. The re-allocated quota would be taken from both the gill net and hook and line fishery, with 25% coming from gill net and 75% coming from hook and line. Based on the Work Group's recommendation, the 2012 pound net quota will be 616,420 pounds, the 2012 gill net quota will be 802,056 pounds, and the 2012 hook and line quota will be 447,204 pounds. The motion passed with 16 members in favor of the motion, 3 opposed, and 2 members abstaining.